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ABSTRACT

The library cannot be considered as an isolated entity, but must be considered in relationship to its place in the international information network and to its place within the institution which it serves. The library collection must also be considered within its framework. Integrated management of the collection implies that all aspects of library management impinge on the development of the collection and cannot be divorced from them. Collection development, in this sense, leads to a systems approach in which emphasis is placed on the information transmitted rather than the physical form of the information. The library budget is one of the factors which influence collection development; it should not be the beginning of library planning but rather the end-product of the planning process. The book budget as well as the total budget should be based on the goals of the library. The structure of the library determines to a large extent the way in which its objectives are attained. The traditional departmentalized structure based on function and not objective can still be viable if staff participation can weld it into a coherent whole and if professionals are relieved of clerical work and freed to do planning and research. (JG)

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# INTEGRATED MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARIES AND COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT

George J. Snowball

At Regina in June 1972, the CACUL Workshop on Collection Development[1] discussed qualitative and quantitative methods of evaluating effective library collections management. Today we will consider, as an extension of those discussions, concepts of integrated management of collections - or their coherent development as one element in the total library system. Superficially, it may appear from the titles of the three addresses that you have been inveigled here under false pretences. I hope, however, that when we leave, we will appreciate that collection development is but one aspect - albeit an important one - of international information resource management - and that while talking of the world information network; the library and the community, and integrated library management, we have indeed been discussing collection development.

A variety of influences is encouraging librarians to consider again their role[2] and that of the libraries in the communities they serve - including re-examining the function of the collection in relation to the goals of the library. Among these influences are: the changing view of the library - by clients and librarians - as a centre for information, with librarians as catalysts in information transfer reactions rather than the custodians of the accumulated knowledge of centuries; improving communications - such as visual telecommunications, in contrast to aural ones - within the reach of all; advanced computer facilities, also within the reach of all; increasing sophistication of librarians as managers; and financial constraints made more severe by increasing costs and reduced income[3]. We shall examine these influences to determine how best they can serve to improve library service and, in particular, affect the development of collections to optimise the resources available. I have deliberately juxtaposed one - financial constraints with the statement of the intent of the workshop - to determine how they can best serve - to emphasise that even apparent adverse circumstances can be turned to positive advantage if we adopt a positive attitude towards them. Later I shall be speaking of the positive value of financial constraint.

A particular library collection forms part of a specific total library system, whose components are the physical, financial and human resources available; individual libraries are components of a worldwide network or system of information centres. It seems to follow that individual library collections should be managed within the context of this network, taking account of the contributions of the other centres.

Within individual libraries the collection should be regarded as one element of the information transfer system, with decisions on its development made as part of the decisions on the management of this system. Too frequently, building the collection is overemphasised to the point where it is seemingly undertaken without taking cognisance of the impact upon other facets of the library's activity, to the detriment of the availability and use of the information contained in the component elements - monographs, periodicals, documents, theses, microforms, records, tapes, etc. - of the collection.

Integrated management of the collection implies that all aspects - organisation, budget, staff, buildings, inter-library relationships, etc. - of library management impinge on the development of the collection, which cannot be divorced or isolated from them.

These introductory remarks on concepts of integrated management of library collections have only lightly touched upon some questions uppermost in the minds of many concerned with the role of libraries in the coming years. The basic philosophy briefly expounded is that libraries can no longer be considered as isolated units serving the needs of their immediate clientele, the collection cannot be considered in isolation from the other functions of the library, and finally, information not the collection is the element round which management of libraries should revolve.

A basic concept is the nature of the international information network and the place of libraries in it. The network is not confined to "libraries" and "information centres" (whether the latter be equated with or separated from the former); it encompasses but is not restricted to the "invisible college" and similar informal arrangements for the transfer

of ideas and knowledge, museums and related centres "for the preservation of objects relating to art history, science or industry, which are open to the public for the study of these subjects"[4], (parenthetically, it is interesting to note that in Britain the Public Libraries Act of 1892 permitted the raising of a rate (or tax) for the support of a museum, and that the Public Libraries Act of 1919 is apparently the only one under which museums and art galleries can be founded by local authorities in England[4]), the media, and computerised data banks. Unless we clearly understand the relationships within this framework it will be difficult to define the role of libraries and to determine the goals of individual libraries, which in turn dictate the policies under which collections develop. It is not my function today to conduct the further exploration of this topic, which we shall be doing later under the guidance of Professor Ettlinger.

Each individual academic library and research library is part of a second system - the educational establishment within which it was founded and which it immediately serves. It behoves us to examine the relations of the part to the whole, and to consider the contribution of the library to the educational, cultural and aesthetic aims of the institution. I do not intend to pursue this topic, which will be developed by Mr. Redmond.

Having introduced and disposed of - to at least my satisfaction - the two major topics of today's Workshop, I will turn to the more mundane but immediate topic of the management of an individual collection within a system of integrated library management.

The ability of a library to do its job - however that may be defined - depends upon its ability to deploy the resources at its command. The resources are the physical facilities - including buildings, equipment and collection; financial support - both for capital and operating expenses - at its command; the staff - with their knowledge, experience, and understanding of their clientele; and those resources it gains access to through association and cooperation with other organisations. Achievement of the best results depends on the optimum use of these resources, which implies that no one element can

be considered without taking account of the impact of decisions concerning that element on all others. It follows that management of the collection can only be undertaken in the context of management of the library as a whole, which is commonly summarised in three documents. A statement of goals and objectives, which outlines the philosophy of the library; the budget, which is the numerical expression in terms of dollars of programs and activities required to meet the goals; and the organisation chart, which is the graphic presentation of the structure through which the aspirations of the library will be met. A well thought out statement of goals will provide a bedrock foundation upon which can be constructed an edifice of programs and activities, while an ill-conceived one will prove to be a quicksand into which a jumble of programs and activities will sink. The budget, rather than being the end-product of planning, is often the starting point, and becomes the strait-jacket which hampers development and movement because of the restraints imposed by the thongs of "expenditure over which we have no control". The organisation chart, which was originally the pictorial representation of the library's structure, later becomes the frame into which subsequent developments are made to fit, irrespective of its appropriateness to the new design.

Management of the collection within the perview of management of the library leads to a systems approach, by which activity is tested against the questions, who, what, why, when and how. The most important for our purpose is what is a library, for from this stems our understanding of what the library should be doing, how it should be doing it, when we should be doing it, where it is being done, and why we are doing it. I suppose the immediate response of the majority of people to the question "What is a library?" would be something like "a place where books are kept", or "a place in which I can consult a book", - the emphasis being on the book. If this is the definition we accept, our emphasis will be on the book and our budgeting and organisation will be directed to the book, to which everything will be subordinate. I suggest a more meaningful response to the question would be "an organic entity through which information, primarily though not exclusively in printed form, can be transmitted". If this is the definition

we accept, then information becomes the central theme upon which budgeting and organisation can be based, with the book playing an important but subordinate role. I would like to draw your attention to a second important difference in the responses - in the first "location" (a place) and "object" (the book) are central to the definition, while in the second "ideas" (information) and "unbounded activity" (organic entity) are central. I believe that thinking in terms of acquisition and dissemination of information rather than the collection and circulation of books will add new dimensions to our thinking on budget and organisation; and free us to explore unmapped fields of library development.

I would like now to turn to the budget, which is one of the means by which we summarise and describe the activities in which the library engages. To many budgeting is a mysterious process about which they know little and would be content to know less, because they regard it as something separate and distinct from matters with which they are directly concerned. In many instances they do not appreciate or understand the relationship between expenditure and the activity which generates that expenditure. Also, programs for the year's work and the budget are prepared independently, so that the relationship never becomes apparent. As I said earlier, the budget is frequently the starting point of planning (if indeed these functions are not considered independently) and not, as I believe it should be, an end-product of planning, during which it should be developed as an integral part of the planning process.

Traditionally the library budget has been developed and reported by line-item, thereby compartmentalising it and divorcing it from the reality of operations. How often have we heard pleas for extra staff, increased book budget, reduction of administrative costs, only to find that they cannot be responded to because the staff element or the book budget cannot be increased - even though we may be prepared to reduce other expenditures to accomodate the desired increases. To a great extent the CACUL Salary and Budget Survey perpetuates thinking along these lines, as expenditures are reported for "Staff", "Acquisitions and Binding" and "Other". The circle is further closed as individual libraries test their budgets against others reported - the percentage allocated to books is high (this is good) compared to that allocated

by others or it is low (this is bad). Expenditures on staff are high (this is good if salaries compare favourably with National or Provincial averages) or they are low (this is bad if others can manage with less). I suggest that this kind of thinking leads to the mediocrity of conformity, since librarians become concerned to defend their budgets by comparisons. It also tends to lead to the perpetuation of the status quo, since experimentation and development along new lines can only result in divergence from the average. I further suggest that we should be proud of such divergencies, not defensive towards them; we can become so if our budgeting is a distinct part of planning, fully integrated into the process.

To me there is little more arid than manipulating figures representing dollars and cents unrelated to programs being undertaken. (Though I must admit to enjoying the manipulation), and little more exciting than witnessing the emergence of a complete picture of expenditure from the jig-saw of the component parts of a planned program. I believe that if more librarians (even those who do not particularly enjoy mathematics at any level) saw the budget in this light, fewer would feel that they are engaged on a sterile, uninteresting project.

It is probable that in the future, as in the past, librarians will be given budgetary limits within which they have to work. And these limits are unlikely to be substantially greater than at present (to put the rosiest bloom on the apple). This should not be a motive for dejection, but of elation, since it should encourage us to meet the challenge of making the most effective use of limited financial resources. The first matter meriting our attention is planning within the limits imposed by the financial resources we can reasonably anticipate will be available - by so doing we will not be disappointed when our most cherished idealistic programs cannot be implemented, since our most cherished programs will be realistically planned.

It is equally probable that overall library budgets will be determined not by the traditional use of objects of expenditure (line-item) and incremental increase (or decrease) from the previous year, but by performance, planning, formula, or some combination, formula budgeting or some variation of it being most favoured at present. Allen[3] has pointed out some of the

omissions in one of the most widely publicised formulae - that for Washington State (which he points out has not been adopted for universities ) - thereby drawing attention to some of the pitfalls inherent in formula budgeting. (In passing, I would like to note that the formula provides for staff and books, but not for supplies and equipment, unless allowance for these is hidden in the factors used). He also states that maintenance of the integrity of the formula is important through all stages of budget preparation, since not to do so may lead to tensions within divisions and departments if actual allocations depart significantly from theoretical allocations determined by the sub-formulae. I suggest that formulae will be used to determine the total allocation for the library, but thereafter those responsible for the financial support will not be overly concerned with the detailed division of this money, provided the library fulfils its function (however that is defined). I further suggest that if the library is projected as a total system, and the staff can be shown that money is allocated where it will be most useful, serious tensions will not arise.

Before turning from the question of maintaining the integrity of budget formulae I would like to make it clear that I am not taking the idealistic and unrealistic position that tensions will never arise, or can be circumvented entirely by explanation. There will always be competition for the dollars, as there will always be those who want nothing to do with them - I am taking the position that tensions which arise due to the competition can be eased, but only by continued application to the problem.

I have devoted considerable time to the library budget and you may be wondering what this has to do with collection management. At the expense of being repetitive, I would like to reiterate that I believe the library should be looked at as a total system, and that the budget should be developed as an integral part of the planning process. By implication, planned management of the collection should be integrated into the total planning function, and the book budget should be developed in the total context of the library budget. Traditionally a certain sum, or percentage

of the budget has been set aside for the purchase of books, this amount then being distributed between sub-funds to procure the volumes needed to support academic programs and to provide general materials. Returning again for a moment to a point I made earlier - this attitude towards the book budget places the emphasis on"the book", rather than on "information", and stultifies our thinking in relation to the function of the library.

Allocating a specific amount or percentage of the budget to the purchase of books (using that as a generic term for all library materials) and distributing this among sub-funds, puts the cart before the horse, is the antithesis of planning and inhibits changes in library operations made necessary by changes in academic priorities, teaching methods and attitudes to the role of the library. Again we are in a strait-jacket, since there will be resistance to changed allocations - especially when these changes lead to reduction.

Again, being realistic, we must assume that we will be working within financial limits, and however we determine the amount we would like for books, we will never have enough. I consider that expenditure on books should be determined in the same way as all other expenditures - from a consideration of needs, based on the goals of the institution, within which the goals of the library have been formulated, and as a result of composition not decomposition.

To this point we have been concerned principally with the acquisition of library materials, which is but one aspect of collection management. Having received them, how will they be used, where do we place them and when do we discard them; implicit in these questions is the larger one - a central one - how do we obtain access to the information they contain.

These questions lead us to the second principle theme of my paper - the structure of the library - commonly summarised in the organisation chart - since this determines in large measure the way in which the objectives of the library are attained.

Let us again first look at the traditional organisation of libraries. Basically we have two divisions - Public Services and Technical Services - each divided into departments - Circulation, Reference, Cataloguing and Acquisitions, etc. There may also be an Administrative division, and the departments may be further sub-divided into sections, units, etc. This compartmentalisation into functional units is undoubtedly necessary for administrative purposes, and will probably remain with us. But again let us return briefly to the question of "What is a library", and where the emphasis should be. The structure I have outlined is based on the book rather than information, and function rather than objective. If we are to change the emphasis we must consider modifications to this structure. Bundy[5] addressed this problem from the point of view of resolving conflict in libraries, and suggested a possible solution would be to restructure the library into "Professional Services" and "Auxiliary Services". The Professional Services would be sub-divided by subject (or in some cases possibly by activity) and the Auxiliary Services by operations. The organisational framework would be academic rather than hierarchical, with the Auxiliary Services having a professional advisory committee. While this structure appears attractive, it has I think two weaknesses - first it is still based on the book to a large extent, and second the word "auxiliary" implies a subordinate role - as does the existence of a professional advisory committee. The flaw that appears to me to be fatal, in terms of integrated management, is that the objectives of the library - determined by the Professional Services - are separated from the operations - undertaken by the Auxiliary Services; operations cannot be separated from objectives, as they are the means by which the latter are attained.

Inherent in Bundy's scheme is, however, a highly desirable objective - the reduction of professional involvement in ongoing routine operations, in order to release them for the truly professional activities of planning and research.

When I started to consider the question of the organisation through which we obtain our objectives, I planned to attempt the development of a different structure, broadly based on Bundy's scheme, but designed to overcome

what I considered to be its weaknesses. However I came to the conclusion that the result would still be one of decomposition, not composition. Instead, I decided to look at what could be done to improve the effectiveness of the traditional structure.

During the past two years Sir George Williams University library has been moving slowly into management by objectives - but have no fear, I do not plan to convert this Workshop into an extension of the one many of us attended yesterday, though our discussion of integrated management does provide a unifying link with that - and from that activity it has become apparent that functional divisions of the library can be transcended, without a change in the basic structure. Our first attempt at defining a program of activities for the year yielded a set of objectives arrived at with minimal inter-departmental consultation, little coordination and almost no thought as to their contribution to the goals of the library. In fact, as a result, it was decided that a new statement of goals was required, to which objectives could be related. This year the objectives (although still by no means perfectly developed) provide evidence of considerable consultation but that better coordination is still necessary. To me the progress we have made indicates division into functional units to be a practical structure provided (a) that these elements can be welded into a coherent whole through working groups, task forces and the like, composed of representatives from each department as required, and (b) that professionals have the time for planning and research. I have therefore perhaps nothing new or startling to suggest, except to propound the need for a significant shift in emphasis on the activity and responsibility for each level of staff. This only reiterates what many have been saying for years - that professionals must do professional work and leave clerical work to those trained for it.

I therefore suggest that we should not look for radical solutions via a change in the basis structure of the library, but that we should look at the details, in an effort to identify those areas where decisions and responsibility are at too high a level in the organisation, for this implies too great attention being given to day-to-day details, and too little to the real management functions of planning, organisation and control.

Before closing, I would like to make a point that needs emphasis. I believe that in the next five to ten years "management" will be a most important aspect of librarianship, since we shall be assailed on all sides, and only if libraries are shown to be well managed will they attract the support they badly need.

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